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## **Anniversary Special Issue of Management Learning**

### **Historical reflections at the intersection of past and future:**

### **Celebrating 50 years of Management Learning**

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#### **50 Years of Management Learning: A Time of Reflection**

Management Learning marks its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020. The journal has a long history of publishing critical, reflexive scholarship on organizational learning and knowledge. This special issue provides a forum to celebrate and build on this history through critical and reflective engagement with the past, present and future of management learning, knowledge and education.

Reasons to write historically about the past of our discipline and mobilize history as an approach to probe critical and reflexive management learning are plentiful. Kieser (1994) offers that workplace behaviours are outcomes of ‘culture-specific historical developments’ (p. 609) and historical research can ‘teach us to interpret existing organizational structures not as determined by laws but as the result of decisions in past choice opportunities’ (p. 611). If we agree that

organizational practices and realities assume their composition by virtue of their past, then researching, writing and thus doing management learning in critical and historically conscientious ways provides opportunities to destabilize hegemonic practices and disturb normative organizational theory. Histories allow us to trace our collective identity and celebrate agency in this sensemaking process. Taking an historical approach is all the more pressing given recent and impending crises - geo-political, technological, environmental and humanitarian - since some crises only make sense when seen in the fullness of time (Casson and Casson, 2013).

There are a growing variety of approaches and conceptual frameworks in management and organization studies for writing histories of organizations (Maclean, Harvey and Clegg, 2016; Rowlinson, Hassard and Decker, 2014), management thought (Bucheli and Wadhwani, 2014; Cummings, Bridgman, Hassard and Rowlinson, 2017) and researching management in historically conscious ways (Jacques, 1996; Kieser, 1994). This has been accompanied by a rise in critical organizational histories (Cooke, 1999; Ibarra-Colado, 2006; Scott, 2007; Durepos, Shaffner and Taylor, forthcoming). Although diverse, this scholarship is characterized by reflexivity (Cunliffe, 2002), a questioning of performativity - history is generated for reasons beyond improving future business efficiency and effectiveness - and commitment to an agenda of de-naturalizing both hegemonic organizations, by exposing problematic pasts, and dominant historiography like positivism that seeks unitary truth (Fournier and Grey, 2000). The rise of critical history research has involved scholarship on management learning and education that challenges the dominant history of management thought in a number of ways (Jacques, 1996; Maclean, Shaw, Harvey and Booth, 2019; McLaren, Mills and Weatherbee, 2015). While some have exposed processes of exclusion and marginalization of management knowledge in

textbooks (Cummings and Bridgman, 2011; Grant and Mills, 2006), others have uncovered knowledge politics and marginalization around geographical boundaries.

Postcolonial histories have incorporated voices and perspectives from the global South, illustrating the ethnocentricity of the content and form of management education (Cooke and Alcadipani, 2015). Strict demarcation of gender roles and boundaries has been the focus of feminist research which draws on critical histories to problematize the gender-neutrality of our disciplinary past. The latter, they argue, is highly problematic because it features centrally as the normative curriculum of management education (Acker and Van Houten, 1974; Mills and Helms Hatfield, 1998). Feminist work involves exposing the absence of women, especially in loci of power, and re-writing history that acknowledges their contribution to management thought. Historical approaches also problematize the treatment of fixed identity categories, for example through queer scholarship (Rumens, 2017), and highlight the importance of reflexivity (McDonald, 2016).

### **Introducing the Special Issue**

The articles in this special issue challenge the disciplinary past of management learning, knowledge and education to enable the imagination of diverse and innovative futures. Our hope was for the featured articles to offer examples of how to open the potential of reflexive history in Management Learning. And collectively the articles do reflect a degree of maturity of the field of historical organization studies, exhibited in the extent to which they blend empirical, methodological and theoretical contributions. Achieving this maturity has not been without its

challenges. Historical Organization Studies is a composite field that blends the disciplines of history with organization studies. While the academic conventions of history have predicated a more implicit methodology with a push for empirical contributions, those of organization studies have called for an explicit methodology coupled with a desire for theoretical contributions (Decker, 2013; Maclean, Harvey and Clegg, 2016). Despite these differences, the cross-pollination of the two disciplines has led to new research vistas for all concerned, including those of this special issue. While some articles explore the history *of* management learning as a journal, academic field or with a focus on its constitutive actors (empirical contribution), other articles feature theoretical discussions on the role of history, the past and historiography *in* management learning (theoretical contribution). We use this explanatory framework (*history of* and *history in* Management Learning) to introduce the special issue articles.

Anderson, Thorpe and Coleman's *Reviewing Management Learning; the field and the journal* and Kavanagh's, *James March in Irvine: a history of the ahistorical* both develop useful new histories *of* Management Learning. Histories *of* management learning, for us, offer historical storytelling of the field, its influential actors and, the journal. Maclean, Harvey and Clegg (2016: 612) describe these histories as "narrating" whereby history is "used to explain the form and origins of significant contemporary phenomena." These types of articles are not atheoretical but as Maclean et al., (2016: 614) explain, "theory is largely offstage" and the contribution tends to be primarily empirical.

Anderson, Thorpe and Coleman trace the roots and development of the field and journal vis à vis the emergence of the U.K. business school. They surface prevalent themes and trends in the

journal from 1994 (post *Management Education and Development*) to 2018, noting *Organizational Learning* and *Business Schools and Management Education* as the most cited topics. Heeding to the theme of the special issue, the authors draw on their history to outline future directions for the field and journal. These connect to the original intentions of the journal namely, to focus on organizational practice in a way that ensures continued relevance for practitioners. A substantial insight offered by Anderson et al., is that though the theoretical rigor of the field has strengthened over time, the link to the day-to-day work of managers is less explicit. They call on future Management Learning researchers to contribute to both theory and practice as a way to ensure continued significance to academics, practitioners and students.

Kavanagh's history of management moves away from a field level history to one focused on an influential actor in Organization Studies, James G. March. It gives an account of March's tenure as founding dean of University of California Irvine's School of Social Sciences from 1963 to 1969. Kavanagh (abstract) chronicles March's "unique and influential experiment in organization, pedagogy and social scientific inquiry." The paper documents the role of University of California Irvine in developing what are now influential ideas including, conversation analysis, situated learning and, ethnomethodology. Kavanagh's research offers significant historical insight into the schism between history and theory while framing our various attempts to integrate the two domains.

The next two articles develop and explain theoretical tools that can be mobilised to do historical analysis in management learning. Sandström, Laurell, Eriksson & Nykvist's article entitled *Digitalization and the future of Management Learning: New technology as an enabler of*

*historical, practice oriented and critical research* and Tennant, Gillett and Foster's piece called *Developing historical conscientiousness in management learners* both theorize history in management learning, as a subject in and of itself. Their contributions are primarily theoretical. Theorizing history, the past and historiography creates research tools, and hopefully a toolbox, for scholars to use to engage in historically sensitive management learning research. Our hope is that these concepts and frameworks become the research instruments that future management learning scholars can use to contribute to the historiography of management learning. Maclean et al., (2016: 614) describe this type of history as conceptualizing, and explain its value as "generating new theoretical constructs."

Sandström, Laurell, Eriksson & Nykvist offer a theorized explanation of two digital research approaches, namely, Social Media Analytics and digital archives. The authors explain these techniques and suggest how using archives might be fruitful for management learning research and education. Archival analysis is also discussed in Tennent, Gillett and Foster's piece, which features as the fourth article of the special issue. They call on management pedagogues to deploy archives in teaching. Above all, Tennent et al., offer an excellent example of theorizing history in management learning with their concept called historical consciousness. It involves a heightened sensitivity among management students to think historically. Their argument is that historical consciousness is an avenue to foster critical reflexivity within management learners.

The next three articles combine histories *of* and *in* the field to offer both empirical and theoretical contributions. These pieces tell stories of the past of the field while developing theory that has implications for doing history as well as the future of management learning. These are

approximations of what Maclean et al., (2016: 612) call history as explicating. Maclean et al. (2016: 612) describe explicating as “History used in applying and developing theory”. The three “explicating” type articles feature the emergence of comprehensive arguments “from the interplay of theoretical ideas and historical evidence, leading to new interpretations of past-to-present and theoretical refinements” (Maclean et al., 2016: 614).

Syed and Pio’s piece entitled *Stelae from ancient India: Pondering anew through historical empathy for diversity* shows how an Eastern legacy may enable new conceptualizations of diversity in organizations today. To do this, the authors analyse stelae, described as ancient Eastern edicts and inscriptions, to develop the notion of historical empathy. Beyond this, the authors problematize the Western-centric nature of management learning by drawing lessons from historically sensitive Eastern modes of knowing, which sees the world through an Eastern gaze.

In a similar vein, Wanderley and Barros’s *Modernization Theory and the History of Management Education: A Burke's Pentad Dramatistic Narrative of the Alliance for Progress in Latin America* comments on the general absence of voices from the global South in organization studies. Their history puts the Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL) centre stage to discuss how modernisation theory was used to influence management education in Brazil. Wanderley and Barros explain that the CEPAL case exposes the politics of foreign aid, its impact on universities and the consequent disruptions to local knowledges. The authors emplot their case using Burke’s Pentad which highlights the interactions among asymmetrical actors whose



power is distributed along geographic lines. Ultimately, the goal of theorizing CEPAL through Burke's pentad is to showcase it as an option for reflexive management learning research.

Michael Reynolds and Russ Vince's *The History Boys: Critical reflections on our contributions to management learning and their ongoing implications* is a fitting final paper for this special issue. It is unique and creative work which offers a history of the authors' interconnected academic lives whilst proposing a call for what they term, historical reflexivity. As the authors review the 27 papers they have published in the journal to identify four key themes of their work, their concern is with what their published papers can say about both the history and future of the journal and field. In doing so, they develop historical reflexivity as their central theoretical contribution. Reynolds and Vince take us through their own journey of historical reflexivity, this involves revisiting their collective academic papers to unpack the interpersonal relationships that hold them together, as well as the subjects explored and how through time, these connect to the broader social and political climate. Ultimately, this piece encourages us to see reflection as an act of composition and in this case, composition of academic lives.

### **Possibilities for the Future of Management Learning**

The theme of the special issue focuses on how an historical view can frame the future of the journal and, more broadly the field of management learning. Based on this, we think it important to ask what our exercise in shared reflection has taught us about the possibilities for researching and teaching Management Learning in the years ahead? What can looking back tell us about our

next steps? What opportunities are opened as we reflect on the collective insights of the special issue?

Our engagement with the special issue authors, respective research topics, reviewers and editors has affirmed our belief that there lies continued potential in doing histories *of* and *in* Management Learning. Over the years, the journal has looked to its past to inform its future (Editorial 1976; Snell and James, 1994; Vince and Elkjaer, 2009). In earlier years, the precursor title, Management Education and Development, adopted a more descriptive historical approach. Examples include tracing the rise of management training and development in Europe (McNay, 1973), and drawing on case histories to map implications for course evaluation and institutional image (Mmobuosi, 1987). Over time, and especially since the 1994 transition to Management Learning, the focus has shifted towards consideration of the potential of history as an approach (Argote, 2011; Alcadipani, 2017) that promotes reflexive practice (Maclean, Harvey and Chia, 2012).

Though history research does appear in Management Learning, we believe it's potential is still largely untapped. For example, the subject of history is missing from Anderson et al., list of top cited Management Learning themes. Only one history inspired article, namely Argote (2011), features on Anderson et al., list of Management Learning's most cited articles. Finally, though our search for history inspired research published in the journal did yield results, these come largely in the form of journal anniversary editorials. Our call is for a continued engagement of Management Learning with historical research. How can this be done?

We offer three insights to generate momentum and continue to realize the potential of history in Management Learning. First, we believe history can be mobilized as an approach to probe critical and reflexive management learning. Second, we propose that historical archives can have tremendous potential in teaching and researching management learning. Third, we suggest that conversations about the internationalization of Management Learning must feature a historic exploration of the geopolitics of management knowledge. Because our focus is on deploying history to open future conditions of possibility, our hope is for readers to engage with the special issue content (including our editorial) disobediently. Please generate your own insights: add and challenge our ideas. These insights with respective elaborations below are not exhaustive. Nonetheless, we would like to begin the conversation with an explanation of each insight.

### ***Reflexivity, History and Management Learning***

Anderson et al., note reflexivity as a strong theme of Management Learning, especially since the 2014 adoption of the journal tagline, “the journal for critical, reflexive scholarship on organisation and learning.” The concept of reflexivity is central to articles with a high research impact. Our exploration of the past of Management Learning as a journal and field hints to the potential of mobilising history to probe critical and reflexive management learning.

While our intention is not to offer an extensive overview of the literature on reflexivity in Management Learning, we summarize it instrumentally to highlight a connection between history and reflexivity. Above all, reflexivity involves a form of reflection that implies turning back onto oneself and one’s research the research tools it produces as a way to problematize

academic knowledge as truth (Swartz, 1997; Cunliffe, 2003). Though numerous types of reflexivities have been identified, what unites them is a dedication to questioning the underlying assumptions of knowledge claims, what is taken for granted and the resultant impact on our research (design, theories, practice and writing), our participants and ourselves as academics (Cunliffe, 2003, 2016b). *Being* reflexive is an ontological claim which opens the capacity for choice. Being reflexive involves continuous and self-conscious reflection on past decisions and actions to foster insight that we can choose to incorporate into the composing of oneself. While reflection implies looking back to solve problems and correct errors, reflexivity is about situating oneself and one's research as an outcome of past decisions and opportunities with consequences for the future (Cunliffe, 2016a). The value of reflexivity lies in its capacity to foster thinking critically about the role and impact of values, beliefs and, actions on our resultant research. Reflexivity is intrinsic to management learning *per se*, since it is only by reflecting on past actions that we can recalibrate and retune actions and behavior in the future.

At the basis of reflexivity is an awareness that all knowledge is socially constructed, relational and situated (Cunliffe, 2016b). While relationality implies that our knowledge of the social world is mediated through our interactions with others, our past and how we imagine our futures, situated knowledge implies that it is always produced in and influenced by a specific geographic location and time with resultant implications for the type of knowledge (ideology, ontology and epistemology) produced (Cunliffe, 2003). Positioning all knowledge as situated and relational grounds a knowledge claim which permits us to suggest it as one of many possibilities. Central to reflexivity is an attitude to unsettle, thus, it promotes a general insecurity regarding certainty in the production of knowledge (Pollner, 1991).

The turn to reflexivity in Management Learning (especially post 2014) came in tandem with calls for greater reflexivity in critical perspectives on business and management history (Rowlinson, Jacques and Booth, 2009). The potential in marrying reflexivity with history is evident given historical thinking is latent if not implied within reflexivity (Stutz and Sachs, 2018; Barros, Carneiro and Wanderley, 2018). Reflexivity promotes historical thought by virtue of its retrospective orientation (Pollner, 1991). For example, to express research as a situated and relational outcome of choices, reflexive researchers must probe various individuated points in time to explore who influenced their choices, where the choices were made and how the various locations shaped the research outcome. Exploring past choices in this way acknowledges all knowledge as “historically” accomplished by exposing its attachments to the “social relations of its production” (Alvesson and Willmott, 1992: 460).

The mobilisation of history to probe critical and reflexive management learning is present in each special issue article. For example, Kavanagh suggests that recounting the events at the University of California – Irvine is central to a reflexive appreciation of knowledge in organization studies. Syed and Pio offer that managers can enhance their reflexivity and learning on management diversity by revisiting the past. What is remarkable is that two special issue articles combine historical analysis and reflexive scholarship in novel and theoretically fruitful ways. For example, the articles by Tennant et al., as well as that by Reynolds and Vince offer ways to be reflexive that theorize ‘history’ rigorously. Tennant et al., show how ‘historical consciousness’ can ignite critical reflexivity in students to enable an understanding of their subject positions. Reynolds and Vince theorise the notion of ‘historical reflexivity’ to encourage

management learning scholars to explore how their collective ideas and academic contributions are outcomes of situated and intersecting relationships. Historical reflexivity proceeds non-chronologically, to interrogate the emotional, conscious and unconscious taken for granted aspects of our practice with an aim to unsettle our being in relation to our craft.

The theoretical and empirical ties of reflexivity and history are nascent. What opportunities are afforded for teaching and researching Management Learning at the intersection of reflexivity and history?

### ***Using Archives to Teach and Research Management Learning***

Our reading of the special issue coupled with our involvement in the budding field of historical organization studies (Maclean et al., 2016) have prompted us to ask what potential do archives hold to teach and research management learning? While Cooke and Alcadipani (2015: 483) remind us that archival analysis is “the historian’s empirical method of choice,” archival research does not feature prominently in the field of organization studies and management learning. If the field of Management Learning is to become increasingly sensitised to historical thought, perhaps archival research can become a normalized research method. Our pointed review of archival research in organization studies below proposes two interrelated claims. First, archives might be useful to teach and research management learning. Second, uses of archival research must be done reflexively but as Tennent et al., teach us in the special issue, they can arguably also be sites that foster reflexivity within users.

Research on archives in organisation studies is nascent. Schwarzkopf (2012) for example, has called for greater theorization of the business archives. While the intellectual roots of our knowledge of archives in organization studies are steeped in work by Foucault (1969/1982) Derrida (1995), Trouillot (1995) and Stoler (2009) and arguably philosophically varied, there are two understandings of archives in currency in organization studies (Mills and Helms Mills, 2011, 2018; Barros, 2016). The first pertains to a collection of documents housed within a physical space (Manoff, 2004). In this sense, archives are organizations organized by hobbyists, past employees, or trained archivists. These actors have an agenda to preserve, to make certain things visible but in doing so inevitably push aside other topics that may be forgotten. Barros (2016) reminds us that archives are shaped by the information needs of society, government and its laws. The second understanding of archives moves beyond four walls to suggest archives constitute an entire knowledge area including all respective discursive and material records. In this way, archives can be understood as “constituent elements of practices and structures” (Barros, 2016: 609) that play a role in creating and preserving a nation’s consciousness and memory while conditioning future conditions of possibility.

The special issue articles by Sandström et al., and Tennent et al., contribute substantially to our nascent literature on archives in organization studies. Sandström et al., explain that spelling out the implications of using archives in management research is ever more pressing given the recent digital turn of archival material. For example, Manoff (2004) and Schwarzkopf (2012) warn that digitization allows for permanent changes to the historical record which deny future researchers of the full record. This potential stronghold on the past should entice management scholars to learn the mechanisms of digitization. On a positive note, Sandström et al., teach us that digital

archives can help to conduct practice-oriented research with improved precision and quality with few compromises to theoretical rigour. For Tennent et al., the archive is a site where students can ignite their historical consciousness. The authors explain that an immersion into the physical archive can show students that it is possible to unearth different and perhaps contradictory sources and reasons why over time, one narrative assumed prominence over another.

Our comments above point to encouraging scholars to *use* historical archives as a means for spurring innovation in the present and for the future. However, this encouragement should come with a precaution to exercise reflexivity on the construction of archives. Manoff (2004) and Schwarzkopf (2012) offer that we must add to existing practical archival advice by theorising the archive itself, as a nonneutral site of knowledge production. Pointing to the “epistemological position of realism in business history” as the culprit for stalling this conversation, Schwarzkopf (2012: 2) calls for an interrogation of the archive as a political and epistemic space. Some have heeded to this call to expose the socio-politics of actors who build archives to show them as ideological sites with consequences for knowledge production (Barros, 2016; Mills and Helms Mills, 2011, 2018; Coller, Helms Mills and Mills, 2016; Decker, 2013, 2014; Barros, Caneiro and Wanderley, 2018). A theme of this research has been the role archives play in both enabling but also limiting our view of the past. Questions have arisen concerning what is missing from the record thus, what is left out and why (Schwarzkopf, 2012; Barros, 2016). While archival silences in management research are beginning to be accounted for, outside of our discipline both Trouillot (1995) and Stoler (2009) have commented that the State controls all the knowledge of its ‘empire’ and the instruments that record the event into documents. If the State controls the record, one might wonder what it chooses to record and represent? These points are



of increasing interest to historians (Farge, 1989; Stoler, 2009; Trouillot, 1995) and management researchers (Coller, Helms Mills and Mills, 2016; Decker, 2013, 2014) who perform archival ethnographies. Above all, these insights point to the need for a reflexive theorisation of the archive (Barros, Carneiro and Wanderley, 2018; Stutz and Sachs, 2018) in Management Learning.

Both Sandström et al. and Tennent et al., contribute substantially to this conversation in their reflexive theorisation of the archive. Tennent et al., suggest that teaching how to reflexively use the archive can ignite historical consciousness and ultimately, foster reflexivity within its users. The authors provide examples of exercises where students can learn the ways of archival research on corporate histories in a reflexive way. While this hands-on exercise is a demonstration of the value of using archives to teach Management Learning, Sandström et al. help us to learn how to research using digital archives. We hope the future brings more dialogue on the use of archival research as a method to teach and research Management Learning.

### ***Internationalization, Geopolitics of Management Knowledge and Histories of Management Learning***

Calls for greater internationalisation of the journal featured prominently in the 1994 editorial by James and Snell, the same year the journal name changed from *Management Education and Development* to *Management Learning*. Anderson et al., note that one reason fueling the name change and approach was a desire for international scope. For example, James and Snell (1994: 502) explained that “...not enough of our published material as yet is international or non-

western. While we have managed to marry papers from the USA and the UK we look forward to seeing *more* material from Asia, Africa, Continental Europe, South America and Australia, to match the spread of our editorial board.” The historic review of Management Learning undertaken by Anderson et al., surfaces the increasingly diverse make-up of the editorial team and its inclusive approach. Though Anderson et al., reflexively acknowledge their own UK-centric approach that could be (mis)taken as colonialist, they are hopeful for the continued internationalization of Management Learning.

This surfaces difficult questions: have calls for greater internationalization of the journal and field been met? To what extent has research focused on internationalisation engaged with its underbelly namely, the geopolitics of management knowledge? If Management Learning is to continue to engage with this conversation, we feel it should be done historically.

Anderson et al., explain that Management Education and Development originated in Lancaster with intellectual roots in Manchester, UK in 1970. What the 1994 calls for greater internationalisation illustrate for us is the extent to which the journal had derived its identity from its origins. Arguably, its Western origins have implications for its unique course of development as a journal, a set of ideas, its contributors over the years and the resultant academic field. Above all, our sense is that Anderson et al., echo of earlier calls for internationalisation are well placed given global population density and management knowledge flows. For example, Prasad, Prasad, Mills and Helms Mills (2016) explain that 88% of the world’s population lives and works in the global South with the West accounting for the resultant 12%. With a substantively Western imprint on its identity, is Management Learning well

equipped to stay relevant and conduct meaningful research in a world of increasing interdependence and connectivity? We wonder if Management Learning should question “just how diverse global management knowledge, as well as the academic workforce that creates it, actually is” (Jack, 2016: 200)? Other questions inspired by Jack (2016) include, who produces management knowledge, under which conditions and where are they located? These point to our fundamental question which is that in the push for internationalisation, has Management Learning focused on issues of relevance to the global South where 88% of the global population reside?

Postcolonial scholars have explored the contestation over international knowledge flows through probing the geopolitics of management knowledge. To do this, Alcadipani, Khan, Gantman and Nkomo (2012) draw on the old-fashioned designation of the ‘Third World’ because it usefully evokes the hierarchy among places in the world. It’s correspondent ‘First World’ construct positions itself as ‘better’ and ‘developed.’ As Alcadipani et al., (2012: 132) explain, though these designations have been normalised through time, they are far from “natural.” Exploring geographic development historically exposes the socio-political processes through which certain countries have come to view themselves as underdeveloped and thus, consented to interventions from the ‘First World.’ According to postcolonial researchers, it is in this process that an entire knowledge area belonging to the global South, the so called underdeveloped, became disregarded in exchange for the progressive interventions from the West. But as Ibarra-Colado (2008: 933) explains, any uncritical acceptance of “Anglo-Saxon theories conditions the type of explanation of the problems of the region and the type of solutions to confront them, producing in this way a certain kind of self-imposed coloniality.” What does this have to do with Management Learning?

The geopolitics of management knowledge play out in management learning and education in at least two ways. The first concerns the Americanization of management education in the global South. Ibarra-Colado (2008: 933) explains that modern Western categories of knowledge have been replicated in universities in the global South and “dominantly, most of the Latin American researchers have been copying and pasting syllabus, theories, methodologies and other management fads and fashions manufactured in the Anglo-Saxon countries.” The now widespread teaching of managers using Western pedagogy and curriculum has made for a particular type of manager with consequences for Westernizing businesses. Postcolonial scholars have critiqued management knowledge on claims of epistemic coloniality arguing that theories and ideas generated in the West are exported to the South and eventually come to dominate and control the global production of management knowledge (Prasad, 2005; Prasad, Prasad, Mills and Helms Mills, 2016). Cooke and Kumar (2019) demonstrate this process empirically through their historical study of philanthropy and business schools. Cooke and Kumar (2009: 4-5) note that geopolitical knowledge flows brew soft power, in which cultural influence is imposed leading some nations to “*want* what the dominant power wants” without the use of force. This brings us to the second way the geopolitics of management knowledge plays out in management learning and education, thus the push for scholars of the global South to study overseas. As Ibarra-Colado (2008: 933) notes, with “the status of ‘foreign students’, they can be ‘educated properly’ before returning to their countries and teach all the secrets obtained in the modern temples of knowledge.” Others from the global South lament issues of language which are seemingly only addressed by investing years of study abroad (Alcadipani, Khan, Gantman and

Nkomo, 2012). These barriers put researchers from the global South at a disadvantage when trying to publish in top tier journals.

While we do not believe that Management Learning has consciously sought to erect geographical boundaries that uphold respective hierarchies of knowledges, postcolonial scholars with an interest in epistemic coloniality teach us that such can be unintended consequences of academic journals who necessarily set mandates and operate through a peer review system that upholds those mandates. Subsequently, the question is, how can we begin to redress these issues? The geopolitics of management knowledge can be fruitfully explored historically (Ibarra-Colado, 2006; Wanderley and Barros, 2019). As Cooke and Alcadipani (2015: 482) argue, “historic, as well as cultural reflexivity is an essential requirement of the global management educator.”

There are empirical examples that illustrate the historic enactment of geopolitics of management learning and education. Ibarra-Colado’s (2006) history of organization studies in Latin American discloses the epistemic coloniality in the region. Alcadipani and Rosa (2011) show the Americanization of management knowledge globally and how this has suppressed local knowledge development. Cooke and Alcadipani (2005) demonstrate the Americanization of management education through an archival history of the relationship between the U.S. Ford Foundation and a Brazilian business school, EASP. Alcadipani (2016, 2017) demonstrates management education in Brazil as a case of soft power. Cooke and Kumar (2019) provide a “meta-history of the 20th century role of US philanthropy in shaping management education around the world” with a focus on “US philanthropic foundations”.

Our special issue also features empirical work that engages the geopolitics of management knowledge historically. Syed and Pio for example, ask how historical empathy can embrace an Eastern narrative for diversity research in management learning, and through this signal the need for more perspectives from the global South. Wanderley and Barros' CEPAL case shows the hegemonic influence of Anglo-Saxon perspective on management education Brazil. Above all, a point they stress in their dramatic narrative is that knowledge from alternative geographies should not be simply discarded.

Including voices from the global South will not only help Management Learning maintain relevance for 88% of the global population but could also, arguably, broaden the community. Management Learning can continue to be a space for learning about different ways of knowing and learning management inspired by the global South. Our suggestion for the future of Management Learning is to continue to pluralise management knowledge and learning, and continue to question the dominance of modern Western forms of knowing while envisioning new intellectual horizons inspired by the global South. There are at least two good ways to do this.

First, pluralizing management knowledge can be done with a call for Western scholars to engage with the global South. This comes with research challenges and precautions namely, the limits on both Western knowledges and resources to learn Third World epistemologies and cultures. There is a general illiteracy among Western management scholars on Third World modes of knowing. Perhaps Western engagements with the global South should begin with a collective reflection on and acknowledgement of "our need to decolonize" (Regan, 2010: 11). In *Unsettling the Settler Within*, Regan (2010: 11) comments that a heightened sensitivity to the indigenous experience

can be fostered by the non-indigenous confronting the “colonizer who lurks within.” Regan (2010) notes that it is not enough to theorise about decolonisation, instead we must let ourselves experience it genuinely through re-storying past injustices. Re-storying comes with caveats. First, studies on the global South must move beyond using the region as mere context for extending Western theories. Next, we must be reflexive and resist falling back on using Eurocentric explanations (Prasad et al., 2016: 20). This means exercising caution to not simply impose Modern Western categories of knowledge. These ideas can help us learn *about* the global South. But what can we learn *from* them?

Second, pluralising management knowledge should involve learning *from* the global South the forms of sophisticated knowledge that stem from their localized epistemes. We agree with Alcadipani et al., (2012) that more spaces must be opened for studies authored by Southern scholars. Is it time for the global South to teach the West about themselves, on their own terms? For example, we can now say from experience that the geographic diversity of Special Issue editorial team (half of us from the Northern Hemisphere, half of us from the South) certainly benefited us as we discussed the compilation of this 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue.

## **Conclusions**

In this editorial, we have reflected on the importance of learning from the history *of* and history *in* management learning, on reflexivity, on the archive, and on the geopolitics of knowledge. Anderson et al. explain how the Management Learning began with a focus on practice but over time shifted to a focus on theory. While this has been an important development, perhaps there is a danger now that the balance tips too far. The element that binds

all of the articles presented in this Special Issue, and which we believe gives the greatest source of inspiration for management learning for the future, is their use of history, reflexivity, new perspectives and theory to think differently about what we teach (or what students learn), why we teach (or why students want to learn from us), and how we teach (or how student learning is changing). Collectively, they challenge us not to lose sight of Management Learning's aims, embodied now across five decades, so that we use history and theorizing to help us think critically and reflexively in order to enable our field to stay relevant. Can we combine historical reflection, theory and our teaching and learning practices to stay relevant for scholars, practitioners and students? The histories and historical analyses presented in this issue provide reflections that should inspire us to think yes, teach well, think critically and keep researching.

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